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FLOOR DEBATE

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know; but we are obligated so many dollars every year for 15 years. If the funds aren't there from the cigarette tax, guess where it's going to have to come from? Thank you.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Engel.

SENATOR ENGEL: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, Senator Beutler referred to this amendment as a scheme. Well, I personally think the whole bill has been a scheme to divert monies to these two projects and these two different cities. And as I said in the past, I think Omaha is the gateway to Nebraska and I applaud what they're doing over there. But I think it should be local funds, not state funds. Here in Lincoln as far as the Antelope Creek situation, I think that is something that's necessary. It will make the city a better city. And I do believe that if there's some state buildings in this flood plain then we should fund our portion of it with state funds. But as far as diverting these cigarette taxes to these two particular projects I certainly oppose. And as, again as a reminder to those who might not have been listening last time, in 1994 in the second session of the biennium, which was my first session, when this deal was made on the floor that 2 cents of this would be diverted for the...to rehab the Civic Center in Omaha and as a trade-off I believe over the cattle...livestock breeding tax and that was a trade-off made at the last moment here, and that is something that is dangerous to do I found that out. And I did go along with it at that point in time, but I also promised I'd never do that again. So at that point, the promise was and it's in the statutes that that money would be diverted back to the 309 fund. And again, we are way behind in this particular area, about \$225 million behind. I know the Governor put a little bit in it this year, and there is still some going in through the existing cigarette tax funds. But the thing is we have to caution ourselves. This 2 cents that we're holding harmless for these two particular funds, they are being held harmless. Well, there's other projects that are also held harmless. Well, if the cigarette taxes go down as they should go down because of all the money we're spending from the tobacco settlement to deter smoking, then the cigarette taxes are going to continue to go down and down and down. So then we're going to have to go into General Funds to take care